

## **Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council**

**618 Main Street, Coventry, RI 02816**

**401 615-7039**

**[www.pawtuxet.org](http://www.pawtuxet.org)**

### **Monthly Board Meeting**

**Aspray Boathouse, Pawtuxet Park, Warwick – July 12, 2010**

**Board Members Present: Bob Nero, Fritz Benz, Jack Donovan, Scott Goodinson, Rita Holahan, Jack Lancellotta, Ginny Leslie, Paul Lockett, Brian Manning, Carl Mattson, Ed Soltys, Gary Trott**

**Board Members Absent: Ross Adrain, Mike Maddalena (excused), Carl Mattson (Excused), Arthur Langlais**

**Associate Board Member Present: James Johnson**

### **Call to order**

**Chairman Bob Nero called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. A quorum was present. He announced that he had heard from Arthur Langlais who will be resigning from the board.**

### **Approval of June, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

**There were no changes or additions; as chair, Bob accepted the June meeting minutes.**

### **Election of Officers**

**As the chair of the Nominating Committee, Scott presented a paper**

ballot. The ballots were distributed and there were no nominations from the floor. The votes were counted and the three nominees, Bob Nero for chairman, Rita Holahan for vice chairman and Ginny Leslie for secretary, were unanimously elected. Jack Donovan abstained.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Harris Dam Update:**

Bob proposed a meeting of the Projects Committee to discuss the Harris Dam. He will e-mail committee members to set up this meeting.

The dam was inspected by DEM and classified as a significant hazard dam. Some of the stone blocks have fallen from the stepped spillway and the secondary spillway needs some work. The DEM inspector will send the PRA a letter advising what has to be repaired and when. The main concern is the repair of the low-level outlet, a safety device.

Bob reported that the courts have assigned two men who have to perform community service to the PRA. One of them owns his own construction company and is a certified diver and construction cost estimator. He is now working at the Harris dam and has cleared some vegetation. He can do masonry work. Eventually the pond will probably have to be drained. Jack Donovan suggested we call the National Guard.

### **b. FY 2011 Municipal Contributions**

We have received \$6,540 from Cranston for the new fiscal year, which

includes a special grant of \$1,000 for tree removal in the River. Rita explained that she had shown a local councilman some of the trees obstructing the River. Bob said he had investigated options for removing some of the trees; he talked with Mike's Professional Tree Service who indicated they have the ability to help us with the trees. West Warwick's town budget passed with \$5,000 for the PRA. Bob expects that Warwick will send its usual \$1,500 and that Coventry will probably not send us anything. Chris D'Ovidio will be contacting the towns again to get the money they are obligated to provide.

#### **c. Ethics Commission**

Bob contacted the state Ethics Commission for a clarification on a possible conflict of interest of his serving on the PRA board and being a Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) employee. He found out that he can not represent the PRA to the RIDEM because he is an employee of RIDEM. This was the result of a 2003 state court decision. This means that Bob Nero's signature cannot go on applications to be submitted to RIDEM, but the vice chairman can sign instead. He also said that all PRA members should be getting a Financial Disclosure Statement from the Commission every year.

#### **d. New Headquarters**

Mike Maddalena indicated to Bob that the City of Cranston was interested in helping us find an office and suggested there may be space at the Sprague Mansion. Bob noted that the storefront in Hope

is still available and that we now have \$833 coming in each month from the biodiesel facility lease. We don't have much of a financial reserve now. Bob said that we have checked out several possible properties for purchase and hadn't found anyplace suitable; we also don't have money for a down payment.

**e. Hydro projects**

Jack Donovan attended a hydro partners meeting and there will be another one soon.

**f. Biodiesel update**

Mr. Dressler has paid the \$1,500 fee and \$833 July rent. Bob didn't know if construction has begun.

**g. By-laws review subcommittee**

The by-laws were last reviewed and revised in October, 2002. Rita, Ginny and Carl agreed to serve on the subcommittee. Rita will serve as chair and will e-mail the current bylaws to everyone and get feedback. The group will aim to report back to the board in September.

**h. Projects committee meeting**

This topic was covered under item a. Harris Dam Update

**i. Randall Pond project**

The deadline is August 15 to use the grant money. We had planned

**to produce a brochure to give out to the neighbors of the pond.**

**j. Letter of support and donation from R.I. Saltwater Anglers Association**

**Bob reported that he had received a letter of support for the fish passage project from the RISAA. He said that the chairman of the group lives in Coventry and that many members live in our watershed. They sent a \$100 donation and want to be a partner with us. They offered newsletter space for an article and they also have manpower to assist with projects.**

**k. Stationery and business cards**

**We have run out of these items. It was agreed that we should wait for a new headquarters before printing any more.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Funds received from Cranston Sanitary Landfill PRPs**

**Bob reported that we received a gift for \$30,000. He proposed we put it in a restricted account for Howard property improvements. A security device is needed to stop vehicles from getting in from Kenney Drive and dumping on the property. Rita suggested we could use some of the money for legal fees relating to the Howard property.**

**In other Howard property business, Bob reported that our DEM trails grant request was not approved. Jack explained that the DEM director cut back the amount of money awarded this year.**

**b. Free environmental updates from RIDEM**

**Bob distributed information about a program in which DEM will perform free Phase I site assessments for organizations wanting to dedicate property as open space.**

**c. Knight Street property**

**Bob reported that the PRA might get a conservation easement on part of a property on Knight Street that used to part of the Capuano operations. The property contains wetlands.**

**d. Upcoming clean-ups/property maintenance**

**More work is needed at the canoe launch; more materials (gravel and mulch) are needed. Work is also needed at the entrances to the Phenix Harris Riverwalk; Bob suggested we replace the guardrail along the road on the Coventry end. The design for Veterans Square is almost complete.**

**e. October paddle event**

**The event will take place Columbus Day weekend. Ginny reported that the Friends of the Pawtuxet canoe day was very popular with five canoes and 33 trips. She also said that Steve Stycos, longtime president of Friends of the Pawtuxet, will be running for a council**

**seat in Cranston.**

**Before the meeting closed, Bob thanked the board for their help over the past year.**

### **Adjournment**

**On a motion by Fritz, seconded by Scott, the board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ginny Leslie, Secretary**